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AUTHOR Brooks, Patricia R.
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ABSTRACT

The manual describes implementation of Project STEP (Strategies for Targeting Early Potential), designed to identify potentially gifted minority children in kindergarten and grade 1. The objective is an enriched educational program with which to identify students whose language, cultural, or economic differences may limit the validity of traditional gifted identification measures. Five parameters which may be exhibited by the potentially gifted pupil are examined: learning, motivation, leadership, creativity, and adaptability. Methods of documenting observations are described, including the annotated record and the SOAP Note (Situation, Observation, Assessment Plan). A final section covers ways in which Project STEP materials (task cards, manipulatives, and checklists) may be incorporated into the curriculum. Sample checklists and recording forms are appended. (CL)

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STEP

A TEACHER'S GUIDE
FOR
PROJECT STEP:
STRATEGIES FOR TARGETING EARLY POTENTIAL

Strategies for Targeting Early Potential

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A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR PROJECT STEP: STRATEGIES FOR TARGETING EARLY POTENTIAL

Prepared by
PATRICIA R. BROOKS
TAG Resource Teacher-Project STEP
Prince George's County Public School System
Prince George's County, Maryland

1984

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JANE K. HAMMILL
Coordinator of Talented and Gifted Program

This guide was prepared by:
Patricia R. Brooks, TAG Resource Teacher-Project STEP
Special acknowledgement is given to:
JoAnn Brooks, Peggy Johnson, Marva Marshall
Nancy Parker Smith, Pamela P. Thomas,
Peggie Webb, Jane T. West

PREFACE

This manual is an implementation guide for the Prince George's County, Maryland Project STEP teacher. The organization of this manual generally follows the initial in-service given by the Project STEP Talented and Gifted (TAG) Resource teacher. It is divided into sections which enable the user to easily refer to specific content areas for review and/or clarification throughout the year.



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INTRODUCTION

Project STEP [Strategies for Targeting Early Potential] is the Prince George's County Public School System's model program designed to identify potentially gifted minority children in kindergarten and first grade. Minority children are defined as those children, regardless of race or ethnic group, who may have language patterns and experiences, cultural backgrounds, economic disadvantages and/or educational disadvantages or differences which make it difficult for them to demonstrate their potential on traditional identification measures for talented and gifted.

Project STEP, begun in the spring of 1980 through a grant from the Maryland State Department of Education, contains the following elements:

- in-service training for kindergarten and first grade teachers to develop observational skills which allow them to identify potentially gifted students,
- a printed checklist of observable behaviors characteristic of the gifted,
- exciting activities and manipulatives which stimulate thinking and creativity,
- off-site experiences and guest presentations for students and teachers, and

- periodic in-service programs and support services from the TAG (Talented and Gifted) Resource Teacher(s).

The result of Project STEP is an enriched educational program which has demonstrated success in the identification of potentially gifted minority students.

Project STEP is a challenging program which depends heavily on the professional, documented observations of teachers. This guide has been developed to assist those teachers by providing the information and resources necessary to implement Project STEP in a manner that will be stimulating and rewarding for all teachers and pupils while at the same time assisting minority pupils to develop their potential to the fullest. Although the goal of Project STEP is to identify the potentially gifted minority students, all of the students in the class should participate in the activities and experiences presented. We believe Project STEP is an excellent instructional program for all kindergarten and first grade pupils.

Prince George's County teachers are encouraged to contact the TAG Resource Teacher-Project STEP whenever they have questions, concerns, or feedback regarding the program. We recognize that the continued effectiveness of Project STEP depends on our ability to work cooperatively.

II. PROFILE OF THE POTENTIALLY GIFTED MINORITY PUPIL

Once upon a time,
there might have been a time:

when the sun didn't shine,
when the sea didn't roll,
when the earth didn't spin,
and the wind didn't blow.

And once upon a time,
there must have been a time;

when nature came alive,
when things began to grow,
when creatures stood erect,
and they began to know.

And through all time
from then 'til now,

these creatures humankind,
have painted life,
they've run and danced,
composed their words and songs:
They've measured and invented things
and pondered rights and wrongs.
They've laughed and cried,
lived and died,
loved and hated too.

But once upon a time is now
tomorrow's yesterday,

with countless schemes
and life designs
to shape reality.
More will run and dance and sing
compose, invent, and paint
and chart new paths and destinies
where space and time combine.

Who are they,

who will they be,
who line by line
composed the rhyme
of once upon a time?

Once Upon a Time — Clinton Bunke and Patricia Dearborn

There have always been among us talented and gifted individuals who have achieved great things. For a long period in our history, it was widely believed that these individuals would always 'rise to the top' no matter what type of educational experience was provided for them. They were expected to endure until the appropriate moment when they would awe the world with their new art forms, literary creations, or scientific breakthroughs. Fortunately for all of us, the importance of nurturing the development of the gifted and talented individuals has received increased recognition and support within the educational system. Increasingly, it has become the classroom teacher's task to provide the first clues to answer the question asked by each generation, "Who are these talented and gifted children?"

Gifted and Talented Children

Recognizing the wide range of aptitude and behaviors which may be characteristic of the talented and gifted, the United States Office of Education developed a fairly comprehensive definition of these children:

Talented and gifted children are those...who by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differential education programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society. Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas singly or in combination: (1) general intellectual ability; (2) specific academic aptitude; (3) creative or productive thinking; (4) leadership ability; (5) visual and performing arts talent; and (6) psychomotor ability.

[U.S. Office of Education, 1972]

It is important to define these six identified areas of achievement or potential ability in terms of classroom performance. Children of generally high intellectual ability will usually function exceeding well in almost all academic areas. Children who exhibit specific aptitudes typically excel in perhaps only one or two academic areas. The child with exceptional creative ability can be described as the pupil who generates unusual, frequent, and high quality ideas or solutions to problems. Children with leadership ability demonstrate consistently exceptional capacity to motivate and organize other children. High ability in the visual and performing arts will often be indicated by exceptionally aesthetic production in such areas as the graphic arts, sculpture, music, and dance. The child with exceptional mechanical reasoning skills or superior athletic ability can be classified as possessing talent in the psychomotor area of functioning. (Stark, 1975)

It should be apparent from the preceding definition that there has been a shift away from the measurement of cognitive abilities as the most important identifier of giftedness. The definition indicates that giftedness includes subcategories which need to be assessed. This expanded definition of the gifted and talented child bodes well for the minority student who has generally performed poorly on tests commonly used to measure cognitive ability.

Minority Children

The term minority may be applicable to many different categories of pupils depending on the criteria established to define the group. Project STEP has set forth the following definition of minority children:

Minority children are those children, regardless of race or ethnic group, who may have language patterns and experiences, cultural backgrounds, economic disadvantages, and/or educational disadvantages or differences which make it difficult for them to demonstrate their potential on traditional identification measures of talented and gifted.

Able minority students fitting this description often lack the experience base and language patterns necessary to decode test items or even to understand test instructions. Recognizing this deficiency, Project STEP seeks to identify these poten-

tially gifted students and provide varied opportunities for each to demonstrate potential giftedness.

Pupils who fall into one or more of the following categories should be initially targeted as a potentially gifted minority:

1. Black children
2. Culturally different children
3. Culturally disadvantage children
4. Economically disadvantage children
5. Native American children
6. ESOL children
7. Rural white children

The targeted minority pupil may demonstrate potential giftedness by a unique use of language and materials or in the process of adapting to the classroom environment. Frequently, however, the targeted minority pupil demonstrates the characteristics which are commonly associated with the term gifted child. A list of characteristics of gifted children, developed by Ann F. Issacs, follows:

Gifted children:

- are curious
- have a large vocabulary
- have long memories
- sometimes learn to read alone
- have a keen sense of humor
- are persistent
- like to collect things
- are independent
- are creative and imaginative
- are healthy and well coordinated, but some may be delicate
- may be bigger and stronger than average
- sustain interest in one or more fields over the years
- initiate their own activities
- develop earlier
- learn earlier
- enjoy complicated games
- are interested and concerned about world problems
- analyze themselves, are often critical
- like older children when very young
- are original
- set high goals and ideals
- are leaders
- use scientific methods or research
- have talents in art, music, writing, drama, dance
- see relationships and draw sound generalizations

III. PARAMETERS USED TO IDENTIFY THE POTENTIALLY GIFTED MINORITY STUDENT

Project STEP has demonstrated that the able minority student will evidence superior ability in one or more of the following areas:

learning
motivation
leadership
creativity
adaptability

These five areas are the parameters which the teacher uses throughout the year, initially to select and later to continually assess, the potentially gifted minority pupil. No child is expected to demonstrate exceptional ability in all areas, however, an assessment of strengths may indicate potential giftedness.

Presented here are each of the five parameters and attendant behaviors and abilities which may be exhibited by the potentially gifted pupil. These parameters are itemized on the Project STEP Checklist which is used throughout the kindergarten and first grade years with those students who are identified as potentially gifted during the first six to eight weeks of school.

At first glance, the material may appear overwhelming, however, **it is important that teachers take the time needed to become familiar with the parameters.** Those teachers who take the time will find the task of classifying and documenting observations will become much easier.

Learning

1. Communicates well with others in group activities.
2. Has unusually advanced vocabulary for age or peer group.
3. Conversation reveals richness of expression, imagery, elaboration, and fluency in language. May be a blend of standard English and ethnic dialects or other language.
4. a. Possesses and shares a large storehouse of information, some beyond the interest of the peer group.

b. Displays specialized knowledge based on life experiences. (Examples: knowledge of shopping, safety, neighborhood, environment, daily happenings, and ability to make change).

5. Asks many questions to determine why or how things happen, what will happen next, or how things work.
6. Shows ability to join smaller ideas into larger concepts or generalizations; uses logical thinking.
7. Looks for similarities and differences. Shows ability to group or categorize items in a variety of ways.
8. Reads or looks at books independently and regularly, does not avoid difficult material.
9. Catches on quickly; retains and uses new ideas and information; may resist drill and repetition.
10. Has a facility for learning standard English, even though another language or ethnic dialect is used in the home.
11. Is keen and alert observer and/or listener; usually "seems more" or "gets more" out of a story, film, etc. than others.
12. Is able to plan or describe steps or events in sequential order.

Motivation

1. Evidences power of concentration, becomes absorbed in topics or tasks.
2. Prefers to work independently with minimal direction from teachers; organizes self and materials.
3. Is concerned with right and wrong, good and bad, fair and unfair.
4. Takes advantage of opportunities to learn; enjoys challenge and tasks which are not routine, resists drill and repetition.
5. Is self-critical and strives for perfection; sometimes very critical of others.
6. a. Is persistent in task completion; sometimes unwilling to change tasks.
b. Moves from task to task without regard for completion.

7. Likes reasonable structure and order; may be frustrated by lack of organization or progress.
8. Is motivated by art, music, sports, participates enthusiastically.

Leadership

1. Accepts or volunteers for responsibilities; follows through with tasks and usually does them well.
2. Is self-confident with adults and classmates; is usually well-liked and chosen as a leader.
3. Tends to dominate others and generally organizes and directs activities when involved in a group.
4. Adapts readily to new situations; is flexible in thought and actions and is not disturbed when normal routine is changed.
5.
 - a. Seems to enjoy being with other people; is sociable and prefers not to be alone.
 - b. Sometimes may be a loner.
6. Is a leader on the playground.

Creativity

1. Displays intellectual playfulness; imagines, elaborates, or modifies basic ideas to add interest or fun.
2. Is a high risk taker; adventurous and willing to deviate from standard procedures, answers, or behaviors; does not fear being different.
3. Displays a keen sense of humor reflective of own cultural background; sees the unusual or unexpected in everyday occurrences.

4. Displays a curiosity about many things; has many hobbies or one intense interest.
5. Generates a large number of ideas or solutions to problems and questions.
6. Becomes deeply involved in stories or films, identifies personally with characters and plots; may create own stories and plays.
7. Is creative in finding ways to communicate. Drawing, pantomime, body language, use of concrete objects, or other alternate means may replace limited facility with oral language.
8. Responds to color, line, texture, and arrangement, showing artistic appreciation and understanding.
9. Responds to melody, rhythm, mood, and other qualities showing music appreciation.
10. Demonstrates exceptional ability to some area of the arts or athletics. (Examples: dancing, drawing, painting, singing, playing an instrument, drama, gymnastics, crafts, etc.).
11. Improvises with commonplace materials; creates original and unusual products.

Adaptability

1. Learns through experience and is flexible and resourceful.
2.
 - a. Deals effectively with deprivations, problems, frustrations, or obstacles caused by the complexities of living conditions.
 - b. Negative behaviors reveal frustrations with environmental structure and a need for emotional support.
3. Uses limited resources and materials to make products to share in school.
4. Displays maturity of judgment and decision-making beyond own age level.
5. Can transfer learning from one situation to another. (Example: applying what student learns about numbers to everyday situations).

IV. DOCUMENTING OBSERVATIONS OF THE POTENTIALLY GIFTED MINORITY STUDENT

Potentially gifted minority students are identified and selected during the first six to eight weeks of the school year. Once the minority students have been identified, the teacher must carefully observe them in order to select appropriate Project STEP participants. These teacher observations are the sole basis for selecting Project STEP participants.

Therefore, it is essential that teachers document their observations and other pertinent data in a manner that will promote an objective assessment of each student's potential giftedness.

The data collected should be based on observations of the child's responses or behavior during regularly scheduled classroom activities and/or

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lessons. These observations should focus on the five parameters identified for assessment in Project STEP: learning, motivation, leadership, creativity, and adaptability. It is not necessary to design each lesson with a specific parameter in mind. However, it is important that teachers are attentive to the responses of the minority student which correspond to one or more elements in one of the parameters.

Classroom activities should be presented to all children within the class or to an instructional group within the class. Students initially selected for possible Project STEP participation should not be artificially grouped in order to facilitate observations of them. Indeed, it is through interaction with all their peers that the able minority pupil can best demonstrate potential giftedness.

Two mistakes are frequently made in documenting observations. Unfortunately, the end result of either mistake is the same, an assessment which is based on a hunch or "gut level" feeling rather than on objective data. The most common mistake in documenting is **too much for too few**. In this instance a narrative report is written which includes not only goals, objectives, and a review of the activity, but also descriptive data about the pupil. Though lengthy, such a report has little "hard date" on which to assess the student or plan for future activities and observations.

The second mistake is writing **too little**. This mistake occurs when the teacher believes that a behavior exhibited or a statement made is so unique and so indicative of giftedness that documenting only the student's action will be sufficient to produce recall of the event and its relevance to one or more of the Project STEP parameters. Often, the teacher is unable to recall the importance of what was written in the notes after even a brief period of time.

Documentation of observations is an essential component of Project STEP. It is crucial that it be done consistently and efficiently. Two methods for documenting observations are presented in this guide. One of the methods should be selected and incorporated into the daily teaching routine. For those teachers who select the annotated record method of documentation, a spiral notebook is recommended for documenting observations. If

the SOAP note method is selected, a blank SOAP note form has been included in this guide as Figure 1. Feel free to copy it for classroom use.

METHODS OF DOCUMENTING OBSERVATIONS

1. THE ANNOTATED RECORD

The annotated record is a collection of dated critical observations, and/or explanatory notes and comments relative to observed behavior. The brief statements incorporated in the record provide specific information about the behavior observed by the recorder.

Example of an annotated record:

Neil - 11/85 - Classifying bags

Neil generated several ideas for the use of bags. Recognized that paper bags could be used as a plant cover to prevent frostbite. Stated that he had seen a 'bag lady' in the train station.

Neil categorized the bags into these groups: bags with handles and bags without handles, bags with designs and bags without designs.

He evidences power of concentration.

2. THE SOAP NOTE

This method is widely used by health professionals to document the patient's response to a specific treatment regimen. It has been modified for Project STEP purposes.

The SOAP note consists of four parts:

S Situation	What is the child's activity?
O Observation	What is the child's behavior?
A Assessment	What is your analysis of the situation and your observations?
P Plan	What activities will be introduced to further document the student's ability in this area?

Example of Soap Note shown
on Page 8

Situation	Discussing the use of the different bags presented. Categorizing the bags.
Observations	Neil said, "Bags can be used to cover outdoor plants if it gets too cold." He recognized that one tote bag was more appropriate for a child because of the size, color, and design. Grouped the different bags into bags with handles and bags without.
Assessment	Neil generated a large number of situations where bags are needed. Shows ability to group bags in a variety of ways. Evidences power of concentration.
Plan	Use People Pieces. Task #9 Learning. Complete Learning Task #13.

Figure 1
SOAP NOTE

Child's Name _____	Task # _____
Date Observed _____	Subject _____
	Page _____
Situation _____	_____
Observation _____	_____
Assessment _____	_____
Plan _____	_____

If observations are properly documented at the end of the first six to eight weeks of school, a teacher will have sufficient materials with which to select the minority children who have demonstrated potential giftedness. During this time, a TAG Resource Teacher will meet with teachers to discuss their selection of potentially gifted students. It is hoped that continued discussions about methods of selection of students for Project STEP participation will help teachers to become more proficient in selecting the potentially gifted

minority pupil.

Documenting the activities of students continues throughout the year. However, after the first six to eight weeks of school, the documentation is placed on the Project STEP checklist (see page V-6). Of course, the annotated record or the SOAP note may be used throughout the year to expand the checklist documentation and to further document the child's performance in the five parameters: learning, motivation, leadership, creativity, and adaptability.

V. INCORPORATION OF THE PROJECT STEP MATERIALS INTO THE CURRICULUM

The purpose of Project STEP classroom materials is threefold: (1) to supplement the educational program presented to all the students in the class, (2) to provide exciting and enriching activities which will enable children to continually demonstrate their capabilities, and (3) to provide cumulative records which, when completed, will have considerable impact on the talented and gifted placement decision made at the end of the two years of intense teacher observations.

In order to facilitate the incorporation of the Project STEP materials into the daily classroom program, teachers should be thoroughly familiar with the content and recommended use of the materials. Obviously, the best time to become familiar with the materials is **before** they must be incorporated into the daily activities of the class.

It is strongly recommended that teachers plan a time during the first six to eight weeks of school to carefully review each of the materials. Special attention should be given to the behaviors associated with each of the five parameters: learning, motivation, leadership, creativity, and adaptability. It is not necessary to memorize the behaviors, however, it is important to be aware of them so that an observation of one or more of the identified behaviors can readily be classified.

The Project STEP materials are:

Task Cards
Manipulatives
Checklists

A description of each of these materials follows. It is hoped that this discussion will provide an easy reference for their use as well as clarify any points made in the spring Project STEP in-service. The TAG Resource Teacher-Project STEP is always available to assist teachers in using the materials appropriately.

Project STEP classroom Materials

Task Cards:

Each teacher will be given a set of task cards. The cards are designed to focus on specific behaviors associated with the five Project STEP parameters: learning, motivation, leadership, creativity, and adaptability. They are intended for use with the entire class or instructional group. When the task cards are used, however, the teacher's attention should be focused on the performance of the students selected for Project STEP participation. This group includes pupils who were selected by kindergarten and first grade teachers during the first six to eight weeks of school as well as those first grade students who were identified as potentially gifted during the kindergarten year.

Example Task Card:

(a)	LEARNING, TASK # 1	
(b)	Level: Kindergarten	
(c)	Area of Focus: 2, 3, 7, 11	
(d)	Source: <i>Ready Steps</i> , Activity 5, p. 63, teacher's edition	
(e)	Procedure: Observe children's awareness of their five senses in describing peanut butter and crackers, marshmallows, or any item of teacher choice. Look and Listen for advanced vocabulary, unusual choice of words, sense of humor, sensory awareness, curiosity.	
(f)	YOU MAY ALSO OBSERVE Motivation 4 Creativity 1, 2, 3, 7 (Checklist Items)	
(c)	12	

Each task card contains the following information:

a. **Specific parameter** to be observed and the **task number**. This parameter and task number is used to complete the "Task and Activity Record" section of the Project STEP checklist.

b. **Grade level** for which task is appropriate.

c. **Area of focus** or the specific behaviors which may be observed during the completion of this task. The numbers cited under area of focus correspond to the numbers for behaviors listed under the specific parameters on the Project STEP Checklist Chart.

d. **Source**: identifies the recommended curriculum material which the task is intended to supplement, or **materials**: lists the materials required to conduct the task. Some of the task cards are designed specifically for use with identified lessons in the Basal reading and math programs. **Therefore, during the first six to eight weeks of school, the teacher should remove these task cards from the packet and clip them to the appropriate pages in the respective teacher's guide.**

e. **Procedure** has suggestions for the teacher to follow to insure that the students receive maximum benefits from the task. It also suggests behaviors that the teacher should **look** and **listen** for in the students selected for Project STEP participation.

f. **YOU MAY ALSO OBSERVE** provides additional parameters and attendant behaviors which may be observed during completion of the task. The numbers cited correspond to the numbers listed under that parameter on the Project STEP checklist.

g. Task card number is used for reference purposes only.

Each task card is numbered. However, the cards are not designed to enable a teacher to begin with the task on card 1 and proceed to incorporate tasks in numerical sequence until the task on card number 61 is completed. Indeed, using the cards in this manner is incorrect. To do so would inappropriately and artificially introduce tasks into the daily lessons without regard for the skill sequencing developed through the mandated curriculum in language arts, math, social studies, science, art, music, and physical education.

To use the cards correctly, the Project STEP

teacher should continually review them when preparing lesson plans and select the task card which best supplements the lesson. **Plan to complete at least two or more activities from the task cards each week.** Many of the activities listed on the task cards may be repeated as needed during the year.

Manipulatives:

The Project STEP manipulative are:

People Pieces

Tangrams

Geoboards

Balance Scales

puzzles

All of the manipulatives listed above, with the exception of the puzzles, are provided by Project STEP. These "hands on" instructional tools should be incorporated into lesson plans and used when intending to observe behaviors involving sorting, categorizing, predicting, task commitment, independent actions, logical thinking, oral expression, small motor coordination, awareness of spatial relationships, etc. When manipulatives are to be used with a task, the specific manipulative required will be cited in the procedure section of the task card.

As teachers become adept at observing the students' use of the manipulatives, they may wish to create a learning center in their classrooms. A learning center will provide a place where the children can work with manipulatives on additional problems not addressed by the class or instructional group. Once the students are able to work with the manipulatives independently, it is essential that teachers establish some method of record keeping with the students as well as a system which allows the students' activities to be carefully monitored to assure that the manipulatives are being used correctly and successfully. The TAG Resource Teacher-Project STEP can assist teachers in establishing such a "hands on" learning center.

Project STEP Checklist

The **Checklist for Potentially Gifted Minority Children in Kindergarten and First Grade** is perhaps the most important component of Project STEP. It is designed to document, over a two year period, the evaluation of a pupil's abilities on each of the five parameters: learning, motivation, leadership, creativity, and adaptability. The completed

checklist weighs heavily in the placement decision made by the TAG Advisory Committee in the spring of the second year. Consequently, the necessity to enter ratings at regular intervals so that the student's abilities can be accurately assessed cannot be stressed too much.

The checklist, which is included as Appendix A of this guide, is divided into four sections:

1. Introduction gives a brief overview of Project STEP.

2. Checklist for Potentially Gifted Minority Children in Kindergarten and First Grade Chart includes the five parameters, a numbered list of behaviors identified with each parameter, and a block of three (3) columns to the left of each behavior. The columns which are to be marked by the teacher are labeled: consistently, occasionally, and seldom.

3. Summary Comments section provides an opportunity for the first grade teachers, only, to summarize the student's strengths in each of the five parameters.

4. Task and Activity Record, a two year record, allows for easy record keeping of each student's degree of success on selected tasks from each of the five parameters. The task number and the date on which the student was observed is included as a part of the record. Teachers may wish to make notations concerning a specific task under the "Teacher Notes and Comments". It is suggested that the kindergarten teacher summarize the selected student's strengths at the end of the kindergarten year.

A checklist should be initiated as soon as a student has been selected as potentially gifted at the end of the six to eight week initial observation period. **A checklist is initiated by the simple procedure of writing the child's full given name in the space provided on the checklist.** Checklists should be protected from damage or loss. However, they should be readily accessible in order for the teacher to record formal observations at least twice a week.

At the end of the child's participation in Project STEP (spring of grade 1), the checklist should be complete. If the child should move to another Prince George's County school during the year, the checklist containing all pertinent observations made

to date will be forwarded to the receiving school whereby the receiving teacher will complete the observations and documentation.

Checklist Completion

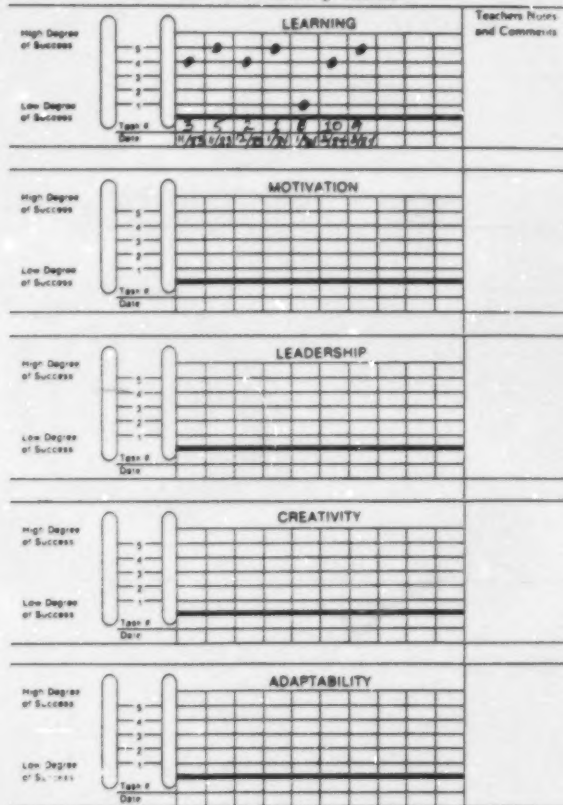
Proper completion of a child's checklist is a critical step in the Project STEP process. Therefore, a discussion of how a teacher may best document observations on a checklist is presented below. **The two major portions of the checklist are the Task and Activity Record and the Checklist Chart.** The Task and Activity Record provides an ongoing record for each child and should be filled in twice a week as a teacher uses the task cards. The Checklist Chart provides for a compilation of information garnered from the completed Task and Activity Record and is completed at the end of the school year.

Task and Activity Record Completion

The Task and Activity Record is provided in duplicate so that both the kindergarten and the grade one teacher can keep records of tasks completed. The form presents each of the five parameters measured by Project STEP. Listed under each parameter is a block of ten columns. These columns, when completed, identify specific task card numbers, the date each was completed, and the degree of success each child demonstrated while participating in the task card activities. Columns are completed to reflect the degree of success the child demonstrates while participating in the task card activities.

The Task and Activity Record should be filled in throughout the year, whenever the task cards are used. After observing the child's behavior during a selected task, the teacher records an assessment of the degree of success the child achieved during the activity. The degree of success is rated on a scale from one (1) to five (5). A rating of 5 indicates the child demonstrated a high degree of success. Conversely, a child who demonstrated a low degree of success with an activity should be given a rating of 1. Degrees of success between these two extremes would be rated 2, 3, or 4 depending on the assessment of the child's behavior. An example of a completed Task and Activity Record appears as Figure 2.

Figure 2
Task and Activity Record



It is recognized that using the scale to measure success involves some subjective judgment from the teacher. However, please strive to consistently assess each student's success with the same concept of "high degree of success" and "low degree of success". It is hoped that this will significantly lower judgmental biases.

When a child has completed a task, immediately following the lesson, place a dot in the appropriate block designating the numerical rating given the degree of success the child demonstrated with the task. It is suggested that the task number and the date, found at the bottom of each column, be written on each checklist prior to the beginning of the class. If necessary, it can be added at the end of the lesson. Since the task number and date are critical

pieces of data necessary for a thorough assessment, careful and precise record keeping is required.

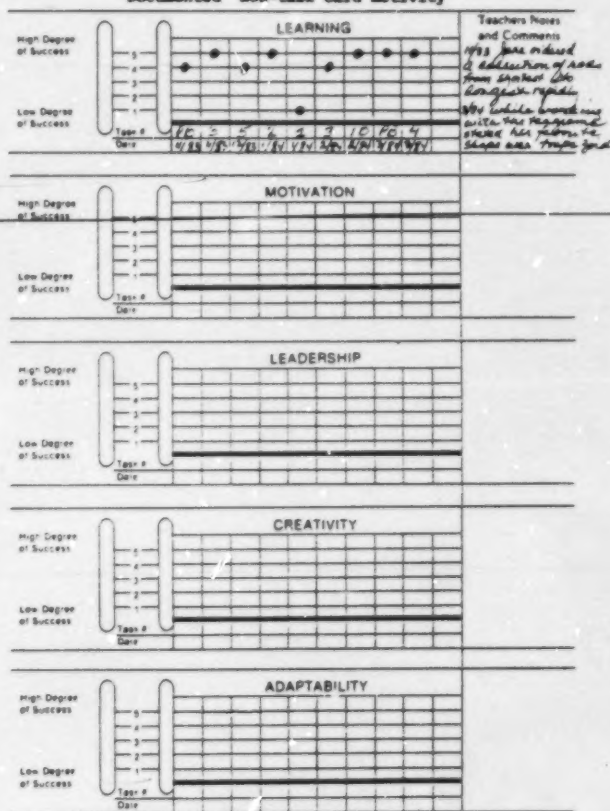
Teachers must observe and subsequently document on the Task and Activity Record a minimum of seven (7) observations for each of the five parameters in both kindergarten and first grade. One may, of course, make additional observations in any of the parameters which would provide the TAG Advisory Committee a more comprehensive base from which to make the critical TAG placement decision.

In some instances the child may demonstrate a behavior indicative of potential giftedness (as defined on the checklist) during a “non-task card” activity. When this behavior is observed, document it under the appropriate parameter by placing a dot on the line corresponding to the degree of success experienced and include a brief comment identifying the observed behavior in the “Teacher Notes and Comments” column. Initial the task number box to indicate a “non-task card” activity and include the date in the box beneath the initials. Figure 3 shows an example of a documented “non-task card” activity. Whenever possible, prepare a SOAP note for the “non-task card” activity to further document the behavior.

At the end of the Project STEP observation year (approximately four to six weeks prior to the close of school), teachers should have made the required seven observations for each parameter for a total of 35 recorded observations. The next step is to complete the Checklist Chart.

Example of Figure 3 shown
on Page 13

Figure 3
Documented 'Non-task Card Activity'



The Checklist Chart identifies each of the five parameters. Below each parameter is a numbered list of behaviors expected to be associated with each respective parameter. The first step in completing the Chart is to review the Task and Activity Record for the numerical rating given for each task within each of the parameters as well pertinent anecdotal records and/or SOAP notes. It may be helpful to look over the task card which was used to make the observation. The area of focus on each task card will correspond to the numerical behaviors listed under each parameter on the Checklist Chart.

the specified behaviors. Once a determination is made about each of the specified behaviors, enter the child's grade level (K or 1) in the block which most accurately reflects the evaluation: consistently, occasionally, or seldom. Because the Checklist Chart will be completed by both the kindergarten and the first grade teacher, it is necessary for both teachers to be able to enter their grade levels in any of the blocks within the columns. It is also helpful for the checklist chart to reflect the child's success rating for both grade levels.

The easiest way to meet both of these programmatic needs is to draw a diagonal line in the block before entering the child's grade level. This system enables both the kindergarten and grade one teacher to use the same rating block if they concur on the evaluation. The kindergarten teacher should enter the child's grade level below the diagonal line and the first grade teacher above the line. An example follows as Figure 3.

Figure 4
Example Checklist Chart

Checklist for Potentially Gifted Minority Children in Kindergarten and First Grade		The student exhibits the following		
		1	2	3
Name <u>Jane P. Roe</u>				
L.S. Number _____				
1. Can successfully work with others in group setting.		X		
2. Has unusually advanced vocabulary for age or peer group.			X	
3. Communication shows richness of expression; imagery; ability to use fluently in language; talks but is devoid of standard English and/or correct diction in other language.		X		
4. Processes and stores a large volume of information; recalls beyond the content of peer group.				X
5. Displays generalized knowledge based on his experience; demonstrates knowledge of many facts; makes statements ability to make things; understands relationships of numbers and other relationships.			X	
6. Asks many questions to determine why or how things happen; often will happen now or how things can.			X	
7. Shows ability to go beyond ideas into larger categories or generalizations with logical thinking.			X	
8. Looks for similarities and differences. Shows ability to group or categorize items in a variety of ways.			X	
9. Reads or looks at books independently and regularly. C. A few lines difficult material.			X	
10. Enjoys an activity, reads and can take ideas and impressions from reading and reports.			X	
11. Has a facility for learning abstract English even though another language or dialect is used in the home.			X	
12. Is a neat and neat dresser and/or neatness usually takes things or gets things out of a dirty box, etc. then.				X
13. Is able to play or describe plays or events in sequential order.				
14. Exhibits power of comprehension; remembers classified in topics or facts.				
15. Prefers to work independently with minimal direction from teachers; organizes self and resources.				
16. Is concerned with right and wrong, good and evil, fair and unfair.				
17. Takes advantage of opportunities to learn, play, discuss and learn; often can not reason, reason one and reason.				
18. Is self-critical and strives for perfection; compares work others.				
19. Is a participant in team competition; sometimes unwilling to change team.				
20. Shows high ability to learn without regard for achievement.				
21. Likes reasonable structure and order; likes to be organized to task of organization or program.				
22. Is motivated by art, craft, sports, performance enthusiastically.				
23. Is motivated by				
24. Activities or requirements for responsibilities follows through own tasks and usually does begin own.				
25. Is self-critical with subtle and demonstrates a usually self-critical and consider on a leader.				
26. Tends to dominate others and generate arguments and directs activities often involved in a group.				
27. Relates readily to new situations, is flexible in thought and actions and is not disturbed when control results is changed.				
28. Is capable to enjoy being with other people, is sensitive and friendly and to be alone.				
29. Demonstrates it to be a leader.				
30. Is a leader on playground.				
31. Is a leader in a class.				
32. Is a leader in a class.				
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99. Is a leader in a class.				
100. Is a leader in a class.				

STEP**Project STEP**

The final step is to complete the checklist at the end of the Project STEP program in the spring of the first grade. The grade one teacher should incorporate summary comments concerning the child's demonstrated potential on each of the five parameters. Basically these comments should be written to assist the TAG Advisory Committee to make placement decisions appropriate for the child. The written comments should always be supported in fact by documented observations during the year.

It should be clear from the discussion of the Project STEP materials that each of these must be used properly if we are to meet the program objectives of identifying the minority child who has potential giftedness. It should also be clear that the success of the project depends on the degree of commitment each teacher has to implementing the program in their classrooms. In the final analysis, only the teacher committed to Project STEP can help us answer the question, "Who are the gifted children among us?"

VI. REFERENCES

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VII. APPENDICES

Task/Activity Assessment Sheet

The Task/Activity assessment is intended to assist the TAG Resource Teacher to evaluate the Project STEP activities.

Several assessment sheets will be given to you with the Project STEP materials. Please complete one Task/Activity Assessment Sheet during the months of January, February, March, and April.

A sample Task/Activity Assessment Sheet is included on the next page.

STEP

Strategies for Targeting Early Potential

A

TASK/ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT

Teacher _____

School _____

Area of Focus _____

Task # _____

This task/activity was:

1. appropriate for my class
2. easily incorporated into my regular plans
3. helpful to me in observing students' special strengths and relating them to checklist items
4. challenging and/or enjoyable for students
5. centered on behaviors/skills which can be observed in other learning situations

Yes No

Comment (optional) _____

STEP

INTRODUCTION

Able minority pupils evidence superior ability in one or more of the five areas on this behavior checklist. The classroom teacher who works daily with these kindergarten and/or first grade children is best qualified to make these observations.

No pupil is expected to demonstrate ability in all areas, but an analysis of strengths may indicate potential giftedness.

The kindergarten teacher should complete this checklist for each minority child whose behavior reflects a substantial number of the characteristics which follow. The checklist is to be completed throughout the school year and included with the student's individual records.

At the beginning of the first grade year the child's teacher should familiarize herself/himself with the observations made during the kindergarten year. The teacher will record continued observations, using the checklist. Summary comments will be made at the end of the year when the TAG committee meets to consider placement.

If a student who is being considered for identification with this checklist should move to another school during the year, the teacher should complete whatever portion of the items which he/she feels are clearly observable and forward the checklist along with other records to the receiving school.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Edward J. Feeney, *Superintendent*

Strategies for Targeting Early Potential

The student exhibits this behavior:

Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom
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1. Communicates well with others in group activities.			
2. Has unusually advanced vocabulary for age or peer group.			
3. Conversation reveals richness of expression, imagery, elaboration, and fluency in language. May be a blend of standard English and ethnic dialect, or other language).			
4. a. Possesses and shares a large storehouse of information, some beyond the interest of peer group.			
b. Displays specialized knowledge based on life experiences. (Examples: knowledge of shopping responsibilities, ability to make change, safety, neighborhood environment and daily happenings).			
5. Asks many questions to determine why or how things happen, what will happen next, or how things work.			
6. Shows ability to join smaller ideas into larger concepts or generalizations; uses logical thinking.			
7. Looks for similarities and differences. Shows ability to group or categorize items in a variety of ways.			
8. Reads or looks at books independently and regularly. Does not avoid difficult material.			
9. Catches on quickly; retains and uses new ideas and information; may resist drill and repetition.			
10. Has a facility for learning standard English, even though another language or ethnic dialect is used in the home.			
11. Is a keen and alert observer and/or listener; usually "sees more" or "gets more" out of a story, film, etc. than others.			
12. Is able to plan or describe steps or events in sequential order.			

1. Evidences power of concentration, becomes absorbed in topics or tasks.			
2. Prefers to work independently with minimal direction from teachers; organizes self and materials.			
3. Is concerned with right and wrong, good and bad, fair and unfair.			
4. Takes advantage of opportunities to learn; enjoys challenge and tasks which are not routine, resists drill and repetition.			
5. Is self-critical and strives for perfection; sometimes very critical of others.			
6. a. Is persistent in task completion; sometimes unwilling to change tasks.			
b. Moves from task to task without regard for completion.			
7. Likes reasonable structure and order; may be frustrated by lack of organization or progress.			
8. Is motivated by art, music, sports, participates enthusiastically.			

1. Accepts or volunteers for responsibilities; follows through with tasks and usually does them well.			
2. Is self-confident with adults and classmates; is usually well-liked and chosen as a leader.			
3. Tends to dominate others and generally organizes and directs activities when involved in a group.			
4. Adapts readily to new situations; is flexible in thought and actions and is not disturbed when normal routine is changed.			
5. a. Seems to enjoy being with other people; is sociable and prefers not to be alone.			
b. Sometimes may be a loner.			
6. Is a leader on playground.			

The student exhibits this behavior:

	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom
CREATIVITY			
1. Displays intellectual playfulness; imagines, elaborates, or modifies basic ideas to add interest or fun.			
2. Is a high risk taker; adventurous and willing to deviate from standard procedures, answers, or behaviors; does not fear being different.			
3. Displays a keen sense of humor reflective of own cultural background; sees the unusual or unexpected in everyday occurrences.			
4. Displays a curiosity about many things; has many hobbies or one intense interest.			
5. Generates a large number of ideas or solutions to problems and questions.			
6. Becomes deeply involved in stories or films, identifies personally with characters and plots; may create own stories and plays.			
7. Is creative in finding ways to communicate. Drawing, pantomime, body language, use of concrete objects, or other alternate means may replace limited facility with oral language.			
9. Responds to color, line, texture and arrangement, showing artistic appreciation and understanding.			
10. Demonstrates exceptional ability in some area of the arts or athletics. (Examples: dancing, drawing/painting, singing, playing an instrument, drama, gymnastics, crafts, etc.)			
11. Improvises with commonplace materials; creates original and unusual products.			
ADAPTABILITY			
1. Learns through experience and is flexible and resourceful in solving day-to-day problems.			
2. a. Deals effectively with deprivations, problems, frustrations or obstacles caused by the complexities of living conditions			
b. Negative behaviors reveal frustrations with environmental structure and a need for emotional support.			
3. Uses limited resources and materials to make products to share in school.			
4. Displays maturity of judgment and decision-making beyond own age level.			
5. Can transfer learning from one situation to another. (Example: applying what student learns about numbers to everyday situations).			

SUMMARY COMMENTS— Grade 1 (For Committee Recommendation)

LEARNING —

MOTIVATION —

LEADERSHIP —

CREATIVITY —

ADAPTABILITY —

Task and Activity Record

NAME _____ GRADE LEVEL _____

LEARNING		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

MOTIVATION		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

LEADERSHIP		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

CREATIVITY		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

ADAPTABILITY		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

Task and Activity Record

NAME _____ GRADE LEVEL _____

LEARNING		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

MOTIVATION		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

LEADERSHIP		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

CREATIVITY		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

ADAPTABILITY		Teachers Notes and Comments
High Degree of Success 5 4 3 2 1 Low Degree of Success		
Task # _____ Date _____		

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Figure 1

SOAP NOTE

Child's Name	_____	Task #	_____
Date Observed	_____	Subject	_____
		Page	_____
Situation _____			

Observations _____			

Assessment _____			

Plan _____			

Figure 1

SOAP NOTE

Child's Name	_____	Task #	_____
Date Observed	_____	Subject	_____
		Page	_____
Situation _____			

Observations _____			

Assessment _____			

Plan _____			

